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ABSTRACT

A policy statement on ethical practices for college presidents developed by the Committee on Governance of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) is presented. Presidents of AASCU member institutions recognize the special responsibilities that pertain to them by virtue of the public trust they hold. To fulfill that trust, presidents should adhere to the following standards in exercising their responsibilities: (1) create, foster, and maintain on campus an atmosphere of academic freedom conducive to the pursuit of knowledge and the open exchange of ideas; (2) place loyalty to the institution above self-interest; (3) ensure that institutional policies and practices uphold the dignity of each member of the campus community and do not discriminate; (4) exercise appropriate probity and caution in using financial resources available through campus foundations or other organizations; (5) ensure that the institution's business and public affairs are conducted ethically; (6) use the special privileges and advantages accruing to the office of the president for the enhancement of the institution; and (7) create an atmosphere of collegiality and fairness in relationships with other institutions to ensure healthy competition rather than destructive rivalry. (SM)

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Ethical Practices for College Presidents

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The following policy statement was developed by the Committee on Governance of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and approved by the association membership at the 28th annual meeting on November 22, 1988.

Presidents of member institutions of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities recognize the special responsibilities that pertain to them by virtue of the public trust they hold. To fulfill that trust, presidents should adhere to the following standards in exercising their responsibilities:

- Create, foster, and maintain on campus an atmosphere of academic freedom conducive to the pur-suit of knowledge and the open exchange of ideas.
- Conduct all personal and public affairs mindful that the primary objective of the president is to serve the best interests of the institution.
- Place loyalty to the institution above self-interest and above loyalty to special interests or particular constituent bodies.
- Formulate institutional decisions and personnel actions according to the best objective information and in compliance with the highest professional standards.
- Provide for the establishment of institutional standards, policies and practices that promote the highest possible level of institutional effectiveness, academic quality, student character development, and ethical practices.
- Ensure that institutional policies and practices uphold the dignity of each member of the campus community and do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, national origin, physical disabilities, or personal beliefs and preferences.
- Ensure that procedures are established to thoroughly review, in accordance with accepted standards of equity and due process, any allegations of unethical behavior or incompetence against any member of the campus community.

•Exercise appropriate probity and caution in using financial resources that may be available through campus foundations or other organizations.

•Ensure that the institution's business and public affairs are conducted in an ethically responsible manner.

•Encourage on campus a recognition that we live in a world community, and inspire within students and faculty an appreciation of cultural pluralism and intellectual diversity.

•Seek to provide an environment for implementation of programs that will foster both the social and character development of students.

•Use the special privileges and advantages accruing to the office of the president for the enhancement of the institution.

•Faithfully and accurately report the institution's financial condition, status of physical facilities, quality and character of programs, and role and capacities to the public at large.

•Create an atmosphere of collegiality and fairness in relationships with other institutions to ensure healthy competition, rather than destructive rivalry.

•Encourage a clear definition of the governance roles and responsibilities of local, system, and statewide governing boards and an atmosphere of open communication with the governor and state legislature, ensuring that all such bodies have a full understanding of institutional mission and programs in order to discharge their governanc responsibilities effectively.

The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) is a leading higher education association that represents more than 370 public colleges and universities across the United States and in Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands.

American Association of State
Colleges and Universities
One Dupont Circle/Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036-1192

Allan W. Ostar, President

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